



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

**2018 FIA Formula One World Championship**  
**Hungarian Grand Prix**  
**Saturday Post-Qualifying Press Conference Transcript**  
**28.07.2018**

**DRIVERS**

**1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)**

**2 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Mercedes)**

**3 – Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN (Ferrari)**

**TRACK INTERVIEWS**

(Conducted by Paul Di Resta)

**Q: Lewis, the emotion of getting that pole position today. Wet conditions after a difficult practice session, how does that feel?**

**Lewis HAMILTON:** It's great for the team to have a one-two. Jeez, we couldn't have expected this. Honestly, the Ferraris have been quickest all weekend and we were just trying to do our best to be as close to them as possible. But then the heavens opened and it was fair game.

**Q: We could hear in the cockpit how excited you were, Toto, you will get to see the replay of how emotional he was, the engineers. What were the conditions like though, was it as difficult as it looked for us standing on the sidelines?**

**LH:** It's so tricky out there. At the beginning it was dry for part of the lap and then at the end it was getting more and more wet. So it's really difficult to arrive in a corner and know how much grip you are going to have. So that's massively challenging. And then when it got extreme, you're just looking for a clean line and really tip-toeing around all the corners. It's a bit like doing ballet... oh, not that I've done ballet, but you know what I mean, you're tip-toeing and feeling the movement of the car. It's all about give and take each time as you go round, each corner. I was up and I was down, I was up and I was down. It was an emotional rollercoaster.

**Q: Well, you're certainly the master at the moment, on the back of Hockenheim and then to replicate that tomorrow. I guess it's head down and go?**

**LH:** Yeah, we've got a great position, so we're going to do our best to work as a team and keep the red guys behind us.

**Q: Good luck. On to Valtteri. What a battle that was. You were provisionally on pole there at the end. I thought you'd almost done it.**

**Valtteri BOTTAS:** Me too. Yeah, crossing the line being on the pole and then obviously Lewis had a little bit better lap in the end. It was really crucial, we only had one go with the new set of tyres and yeah, he was quicker on that lap. Obviously he was later as well, so the track is all the time drying up. As a team for us it's a one-two. But it could have been worse today here.

**Q: It's a front-row lock-out for the Silver Arrows and clean run down to Turn 1, so I'm sure you'll be up for the fight tomorrow?**

**VB:** For sure. We are free to fight, so I'm looking forward to it.

**Q: All the best. We head on to find Kimi Raikkonen. Kimi, third position, the best for Ferrari, but after the starts you've been making lately you must be optimistic for the race?**

**Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN:** Obviously it's not ideal, but I think what is the most important and nice thing is that the car was driveable and enjoyable in the wet today. I think I was unlucky with the last... we changed to new tyres and there was a lot of grip but we got behind a Haas and in the spray, as you know, it's impossible to see and improve, but there was a chance in these conditions today to be quite comfortably on pole but it didn't happen. So tomorrow is another day and we'll keep trying.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Congratulations Lewis. Your race engineer came on the radio at the end of that session and described it as "hectic". Just how intense was it behind the wheel?**

**LH:** Well, I could hear it in Bono's voice. I guess he was on the edge and nervous, as everyone was. It was such a tricky session, as you could see. We started out with the a large part of the track dry and making the right calls, getting the timing perfect and spot on in these conditions is everything. Maybe you're a minute too early and you're on a worse track, or you're a minute too late and it's raining more on the track or something like that, so it's very difficult out there. When they came across the radio and said "you've got one lap to make the difference" I was four tenths I think behind Kimi at the time and I guess Valtteri was just ahead of me. He went pole I assume and just to keep it together... everyone is just so passionate, Bono and my engineers and my mechanics, everyone on our team is so passionate about it, so to get a one-two particularly when we know that we were not going to be getting pole here in the dry conditions, the Ferraris were just too fast, but we were just focused on trying to do the best job we could and maybe lock out the second row. So for the heavens to open and for us to be in this position is such a blessing for all of us and we don't take the opportunity for granted. We're going to work hard together as a team to try to keep the red behind us.

**Q: Well done. Valtteri coming on to you. Your first front row here in Hungary. Just talk us through the session and your emotions immediately after Q3 when you realised Lewis had got the pole?**

**VB:** Yeah, I think Lewis already said pretty much everything. It was a pretty hectic session and from the team it really required a lot of precision and perfect timing and being very reactive to the conditions. So I think on that, how the team was reacting all through the session, every qualifying, we got that one-two. They did a really good job. Obviously we had to do something as well with Lewis. It was not an easy session. Very easy to make mistakes and in the end it came down to one lap. From my side I felt the lap was pretty good. I was up on the lap time but those last two corners felt very low-grip, sliding a bit, crossing the line knowing I was on pole at that point and just waiting for the answer and they told me that Lewis just pipped me and of course at that point I was disappointed and still am, but I'm really glad as well that we can be here in Budapest one-two on the grid because track position here means a lot in the race so we have a really good chance tomorrow to get the perfect result.

**Q: Very well done. Kimi, Lewis has just told us that Ferrari have the fastest car here in the dry, what was it like in the wet?**

**KR:** Obviously I think it was quite tricky. We did most of the time the right calls. In Q2 I wanted to go with the dry tyres to see if we had time to do one lap. Obviously it wasn't the case, so it was a bit tricky the one lap with the inters. It was a bit late when it started to rain. But it was enough to get through, that's the main thing. Last qualification, we had a very... yeah. It's disappointing not to be the first. I think we had the speed today. I was pleasantly surprised how nice the car was in the wet, because that definitely hasn't been our strongest point. That was great and I was able to drive it at least in the wet. I was a bit unlucky with the traffic once we changed to new tyres. There was more grip and for sure a lot more time, but we got behind Haas and you know I couldn't really slow down a lot more or else we wouldn't have time to start and then the spray there was nothing I could have done. It's shame because today for sure there was the speed. But tomorrow is another day.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Peter Farkas – Auto Motor) This is primarily for Lewis and Valtteri. Congratulations, the first part of the job is done but tomorrow it will probably be as dry and hot as it was tomorrow morning and yesterday afternoon when you weren't really comfortable, especially with overheating of the rears. So, how much of a concern is it for you, for tomorrow's race if**

**it will be that hot? And what about the long stints from yesterday. How confident are you that you will be able to keep the Ferraris behind?**

**LH:** Well, for a track that's usually been so good for me and worked so well for me, it's not been really the strongest for me the last couple of years, this year and last year. Even this weekend, if it was dry Valtteri had been quicker than me all weekend. Been struggling with the set-up and the feel with these tyres. The long run was so-so. The Ferrari's were quicker on the long run – but, as Valtteri mentioned, positioning is really very key here. It's a track where... this is the third hardest track in the calendar to overtake. So, I think this is really, as I said, it's quite a blessing. It will mean it's probably a close race between us all but getting through the stint is going to be key, not going over the temperature limits that we have been facing. Yeah. It's going to be close. I can't really tell you what's going to happen. Just got to get our heads down and keep trying to pull away.

**Q: Valtteri, anything to add about the Mercedes pace relative to the Ferrari?**

**VB:** Yeah, I think from our numbers we were the third quickest team on the long runs – so I think tomorrow we really need to get everything perfect from the race start. It's going to be really hot, a really long race, so... yeah, overtaking is difficult but there's many opportunities for the cars behind to get us if they have more speed. So we really need to be on it.

**Q: (Scott Mitchell – Autosport) Question for all three drivers regarding the conditions at the end of qualifying. Lewis, given the way Q3 was going, just how big a lap from you was that to take pole. And Valtteri and Kimi, did you think your laps had been good enough for pole or did you feel that you'd left a bit on the table?**

**LH:** I had no idea in qualifying that I would be shooting for the front row and pole position. As I went into that last lap I knew I had to put together each sector and really pull something special out, firstly to overtake the Ferraris but also I knew I had cars ahead and around me, so, I think the lap started out well. As I said down on the grid, there were some corners that were not as good as another lap – but it was all about making a compromise, and some to get better in another – but collectively I think it was a very, very good lap. Particularly, I would say, the last sector. I don't know how it is on the sector times but that felt, that's where I felt, I really made the difference. It was really about patience and also positioning on the track. Yeah, I couldn't be happier with it. As I said, this is quite a shock really. I was not expecting to be here so very grateful for today.

**Valtteri?**

**VB:** Yeah, it felt like a very good lap to me. Especially sector one, two, felt pretty nice. I think in these kinds of conditions, when you go out, when you have one lap to go, and you need to make it on that track condition, each lap is different to another. So, for sure, if you can do the lap again, you can find something. I must say I left something on the table and obviously Lewis was on pole with a similar car, so I'm looking forward to investigating from the data what I could have done better.

**Kimi?**

**KR:** I think on used tyres, when I did the lap it was pretty decent. For sure there were places to improve but, like I said earlier, when we swapped to the new tyres it had obviously dried up and for sure there you could feel straight away on the out lap there was more grip – and we never really got the chance to put the laps in because a bit unlucky with the position we were in.

**Q: (Christian Menath – Motorsport-magazin.com) Question for all three of you, you mentioned timing is crucial in these conditions. A few years ago, with the old engine it was just refuelling the car and staying out all the time until the track has the best conditions. Nowadays there is another factor with the energy management in the car, so how difficult is it to be with full power at the right time? How many laps can you do with full power without doing a push-charge-push-charge thing? How difficult is it?**

**LH:** It depends which mode you use. In those conditions it's not really necessary to... if you have time to do so several laps, then you don't use all your energy on one lap. You use a different power that allows you to keep it balanced over several laps. For example, the last lap you use everything. It's pretty straightforward. It's not really difficult to... it's not difficult.

**Anything from Valtteri and Kimi about how you manage the session? No?**

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globoesporte.com) To all Mercedes drivers. The fact you have free option to choose the tyre tomorrow, considering Q2 was wet, is it an advantage to you tomorrow – considering the difficulty you've had with the ultrasoft. And also, out of curiosity, the fact that you have a little horsepower less than Ferrari in these conditions, could be an advantage?**

**LH:** Well, we didn't suffer on the softs. The softs were actually, I think, a better tyre for us. If anything we weren't as good as they were on the ultra. But there's a difference between the two tyres, particularly for that long straight, so I think it's highly unlikely we're going to sacrifice keeping our positions at the start – but again, I don't know what the team are going to decide but I imagine we are going to start on the ultra, even with the choice. And yeah, who knows where Ferrari picked up their horsepower. Good for them. In our minds, regardless of how or where they get their power from, we just focus on trying to do a better job within ourselves. Just try to improve. A lot of pressure's on the guys back at Brixworth. They're just trying to eke out every little bit for upgrades for the future. And then, on the car side, the guys are just pushing flat out. This is such a great horse race, y'know? It's really about using... everyone's trying to be at the maximum energy, the maximum one hundred per cent the whole year long – which is a very, very hard thing to do.

Just going back to the question earlier on about how difficult the lap was. You only get certain moments in life. You never get them back. And so when I was going through that lap, I was thinking it's now or never. Maybe next year I'll have the chance to come and drive this track but now – at this particular time, at this age, I will never be 33 again and I'll be in a different position next time. It's like your whole life... not that your life depends upon it but everything that you've worked for comes to that moment, and so the amount of pressure there, or that I put in on myself, is huge. I'm sure it's the same for all of us.

**Valtteri, just to follow up, as Lewis was saying, it's one of the longest runs to Turn One, is that enough to sway you on to the ultra tyre as well?**

**VB:** I think yeah, we definitely need to analyse everything on that. But yeah, it's a good question. We'll need to make decisions obviously very soon. So... yeah, it's going to be ultra or soft, can't say it.

**Q: (Heikki Kulita – Turun Sanomat) To the Finnish drivers: in these conditions after you both got so close, was this the best ever chance so far to get the first ever Finnish one-two in qualifying?**

**KR:** Well, this is what we've got so it's a bit pointless to if this or that would happen, we're second or third so the rest doesn't matter really.

**VB:** I think we've had opportunities before so I wouldn't say it was the best but... one day, Heikki...

**Q: (Ben Hunt – The Sun) Lewis, congratulations on the pole. You were half a second quicker than Sebastian, you had the inferior car. Does it prove that you are the better driver? Second question is as well, how good is your rain dance because you might need that tomorrow?**

**LH:** To the second question: I think the dance is pretty good but I don't think we need the rain tomorrow. I'm hoping that we don't need the rain tomorrow. And on the first part, obviously I know the answer to that question but it's for you and the public to judge that. All I can do is try to be the best I can be every single time we get on track and regardless of ultimately mine and everyone's opinion, the results will hopefully speak for themselves so that's what I put all my energy into. In such tricky conditions with so much pressure today, hopefully the more and more and more I do, days like this, hopefully, bit by bit, maybe we will change the mentality or the thought process of fans who maybe thought one way, shift them to the other way. Who knows? I don't know why but my following goes up like 100,000 every week so I'm doing something right.

**Q: (Luis Vasconcelos – Formula Press) For the two Finnish drivers: given track position is very important here and also strategy, how much risk are you willing to take, going into turn one, also bearing in mind the incidents we've had in the last three or four races?**

**VB:** I think it's an extremely tough battle this year for the championship. There's still a long way to go, obviously and every point will count. Of course we always need to calculate the risk but for sure, if you lose track position here it's not a good thing so for sure we need to go for it and for me personally, starting second of course I want to gain one position and the last thing I want to do is lose positions so for sure we need to do the maximum we can.

**Q: Kimi, how aggressive can we expect you to be tomorrow?**

**KR:** I've nothing to lose, do I? We'll do the normal things and see where we come out and... you can plan it as much as you want but things will go quickly and obviously try to make the right decisions on the tyres when it comes and hopefully make a good getaway and see what we can do.

**Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action, Speedsport) Valtteri, a follow-up to that question: normally starting off the racing line here is not ideal. Do you think, with the rain cleaning the track so much on both sides, that disadvantage won't be as apparent tomorrow?**

**VB:** To be honest I have no idea. I can't even remember if pole side or the other side is better and especially with the rain, how it's going to affect... I don't know how many categories are going to run before the race so we're going to find out and we hopefully we're going to approach the race start with a good estimate on how much grip there is so we can make the most out of it. I can't answer your question.

**LH:** There used to be a big difference between first and second, the right and the left side on the older surface but the new surface it's less of a difference if a difference at all. I think the last couple of years it's been pretty much the same.

**Q: (Louis Dekker – NOS) Lewis, Ricciardo in P12, Max Verstappen on P7; could have happened to you in these circumstances. Was it so tricky, was the line so thin?**

**LH:** Could that have happened to me? Of course it could have gone wrong, for sure. But it could have gone wrong for all of us. I don't know what their scenario was or if it was done due to timing but I think our team did an exceptional job today. They brought their A game in these conditions and I guess that's why you hear Bono's voice afterwards because it's so nerve-wracking for them. They're always trying to do their best, all the teams are, you can't always get it right but a lot of work goes into understanding days like this and learning how to react and I think our team has shown that they are right at the forefront of professionals. And ultimately we both did the laps that were needed, we didn't make mistakes through the session.

**Q: (Scott Mitchell – Autosport) For the two Mercedes drivers: a couple of races ago there was a slight weakness on the start that Toto especially said he wanted to address. How much work has gone into that, how confident are you of getting a clean getaway and getting a good run down to turn one tomorrow?**

**LH:** Yeah, it's an ongoing process. The Ferraris have been very very good on their starts. They have been for years, they've always found some way of... It's obviously a priority every year, they start when they're doing development, it's obviously some sort of priority for them because obviously there's room to gain. The least you want to do is hold position and the most you want to do is gain meters on everyone. But yeah, we are constantly working, there's a lot of work going on to try to improve but it's only been a couple of weeks so... But I think we're in as good a position as we've been before so we will see, we will do our best tomorrow.

**Q: (Heikki Kulta – Turun Sanomat) Kimi, qualifying in the wet has been quite difficult for you for some time. Can you remember when you last had this kind of good feeling like today?**

**KR:** Like I said earlier, I think that we're disappointed where we finished in the end because I think we had the speed but then on the other hand, it's nice that we can actually drive like it should be in the wet and it's been a while since we've really been comfortable in these kind of conditions and obviously it depends on the day and place and how much it rains but today the car was as it should be and that you can actually push and obviously we had the speed now. That's a very positive thing and yeah, I don't know, whenever it was, it doesn't really change an awful lot.

Ends